

Saskatchewan LIBERAL HANDBOOK

1929

**A Record
of Substantial Achievement
A Sound Financial Position,
Unprecedented Growth and
Wise Progressive
Administration**

Published by authority of the Saskatchewan Liberal Association



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Liberals Are United

(Excerpt from statement in Legislature by Chas. McIntosh, M.L.A. for Kinistino, January 30, 1929, in reply to Tory allegations appearing in "Regina Daily Star" of a revolt against Premier Gardiner).

"It is not necessary for me to defend the Prime Minister. In times past he has proved himself quite capable of defending himself, and, in my opinion, he stands head and shoulders above all his opponents. We readily understand why they dislike him—he has spoiled their game too often. But it is just as well that "The Regina Star" and other interested parties should understand that **THE LIBERAL PARTY IN THIS PROVINCE IS A UNITED PARTY BEHIND THE LEADERSHIP OF HON. MR. GARDINER, AND THAT THE STRENGTH, COHESION AND SOLIDARITY OF THE LIBERAL PARTY IN THIS PROVINCE REMAIN UNIMPAIRED.**

"We might as well tell the Prime Minister's opponents that every member on this side of the House is proud to follow the leadership of Mr. Gardiner. We believe him to be a man of sterling character, of unquestionable integrity and of conspicuous ability, and he stands high not only in the respect, not only in the admiration but also in the affections of every member supporting the Government. **PREMIER GARDINER DOES NOT SUFFER BY COMPARISON WITH ANY LEADER OF GOVERNMENT THIS PROVINCE HAS HAD; NOR DOES HE SUFFER BY COMPARISON WITH ANY OTHER PROVINCIAL PREMIER IN CANADA.**

"I am not aware that by word or act, has he ever, as Prime Minister, brought the principles of Liberalism into peril or disparagement. On the contrary, I believe that time after time—and again in a magnificent manner, last night—he has shown that he has a lofty conception of, and an unswerving fidelity to, Liberal principles, and (what is more important) to the true and fundamental interests of the people of Saskatchewan.

"I am not a prophet or the son of a prophet, but I am confident of this, that, when next the people of this Province have an opportunity to pass judgment upon the Prime Minister and his Government, and upon the Liberal party, the whole of Canada will echo with the sound of our triumphs."

Conservative Admission of Defeat

"**WE CANNOT HOPE TO DEFEAT THE GOVERNMENT, AND IT IS NOT DESIRABLE THAT WE SHOULD, FOR THE CONSERVATIVES ARE NOT YET READY FOR OFFICE.**"—*Introductory statement by R. J. Hill, Chairman of Conservative Nominating Convention, held at Swift Current on April 19, 1929.*

SASKATCHEWAN'S Women and Children

A Review of Some Matters
Especially Affecting Their
Rights and Interests as the
Same Have Been Dealt With
by the Liberal Government
of the Province

Issued by Authority of the Saskatchewan Liberal Association



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Saskatchewan's Women and Children

Inaugurated as a Province of Canada in 1905, along with its twin sister, Alberta, Saskatchewan within two short decades forged ahead to the position of the third Province of Canada in point of population, to an equally strong and proud position in volume and value of its annual production, and to the eminently gratifying place of first among the Provinces in the per capita wealth of its people.

Whatever credit is due to the Government of the Province for these things must accrue to the Liberal party because that party has an unbroken record in office throughout the whole period. Therefore, whatever credit or discredit accrues to Saskatchewan because of legislation and policies affecting the rights and interests of women and children must lie at the door of the Liberal party.

Have those rights been protected and those interests safeguarded and advanced? Has Saskatchewan, under Liberal administration, been derelict in its duty?

Rights of Suffrage and Franchise

To begin with the first of those matters in which women are interested in so far as they affect public affairs in the Dominion and its Provinces, the fact is to be recorded that it was in the Prairie Provinces, and under Liberal administrations, that equal rights of suffrage with men was first granted to Canadian women. While the struggle to obtain the vote for women was still raging in Great Britain, and before it was granted in Canada, Australia or South Africa, it was freely given by Liberal Governments in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, thus paving the way for the final triumph of the principle elsewhere. In the spring of 1916 the Legislatures of these three Provinces were simultaneously in session, and in each of them legislation conferring the franchise upon women on terms of equality with men was introduced and passed, the Bills being assented to upon prorogation in Manitoba on March 10, in Saskatchewan March 14, and in Alberta April 19.

This action by the Liberal Governments in the three Prairie Provinces offers a marked contrast to the other Provinces. In that same year (1916), a Bill was introduced in the Ontario Legislature by a Liberal. It was voted down by the Conservative majority, which, however, in the face of Liberal action in the Western Provinces, had to bow to the inevitable the following year and grant the franchise to women, although the same Conservative majority rejected a Liberal Bill to give women the right to sit in the Legislature.

In British Columbia that same year a Conservative Government was in office. Instead of granting the franchise to women, as did the Liberals of the West, it provided for a referendum vote on the subject to become effective, if carried, on January 1, 1917, but in the meantime it called a general election for September 14, 1916, thus disfranchising the women for another Legislative term.

In 1917, a Bill was introduced in the Nova Scotia House by a Liberal. It was defeated 12 to 8, but the following year suffrage was granted.

In New Brunswick, 1917, a Liberal Bill was defeated 25 to 14. The following year the Liberals again introduced a Bill but the then Conservative Premier opposed it as "interfering with the rights of the Crown," and stated he would advise the Lieutenant Governor to disallow it if passed. Under these circumstances it was withdrawn. Nevertheless, suffrage was granted the following year. Prince Edward Island came into line in 1922.

To Western Liberalism, therefore, the women of Canada are indebted for leadership in securing the franchise.

The amendments to the Saskatchewan Election Act in 1916 conferring the franchise on women were supplemented at the next session of the Legislature by an amendment to the Legislative Assembly Act giving to women the same rights as men to membership in that body, a right which was shortly afterwards exercised in the election of Mrs. R. J. Ramsland to the Legislature.

Not only in relation to elections for the Legislative Assembly, but in all municipal and school elections, whether in city, town,

village or rural municipality, Saskatchewan women enjoy exact equality with men, and to an ever-increasing degree they are taking advantage of those rights.

Maternity Grants

In Saskatchewan an expectant mother who, for financial reasons, is unable to procure necessary medical, hospital or nursing attention, or clothing for herself or her expected child, may obtain such assistance from the Government in the form of a cash grant. This aid is not given in cities and towns, but is intended specially for mothers in outlying districts where the doctor is put to heavy expense in attending the patient, and hospitals and nurses are far distant. Thus, in the most critical period of life for both mother and child, Saskatchewan looks after them. These grants amount in the aggregate to over \$10,000 a year.

Mothers' Allowances

A widowed mother, or one whose husband is in jail, or in an institution for incurables or the feeble-minded, or is permanently incapacitated by disease from contributing to the support of his family, or a woman being unmarried or a widow, has resident with her one or more children who are orphan and she is the grandmother, sister, aunt, or other suitable person acting as the foster-mother of such children, and has not adequate means to care properly for and educate them without assistance, is entitled to a Mother's Allowance, until such children reach the age of sixteen years. During the past three years over one million dollars has been paid in Mothers' Allowances, and the amount is yearly increasing.

Property of Married Women

Complete freedom and protection is secured to a married woman in the holding of property in her own right without her husband's consent, under the provisions of The Married Woman's Property Act, and to the earnings of her children if she is deserted, is living apart from her husband for a cause justified by law, or where the husband neglects to provide for her support and that of his family, or is a lunatic or undergoing imprisonment for a criminal offence. The Widows' Relief Act secures to her

at least one-third of her husband's estate if he dies intestate, and provides a means of redress if, under her husband's will, she is left less than one-third. Her interests are further safeguarded under the terms of The Marriage Settlement Act.

Woman's Rights in the Home

Under safeguards provided by The Homesteads Act, a man cannot mortgage the home without the consent of his wife, and such consent must be given before an official or a solicitor other than the one who prepared the document, and after an examination separately and apart from her husband at which she acknowledges that she understands her rights in the homestead and signs the instrument of mortgage of her own free will and without compulsion on the part of her husband. All documents affecting the sale, transfer or incumbrance of the homestead must contain the wife's signature. The widow of the owner has her rights protected in a similar way. The interests of wife and children are also protected in the event of seizure of property for debt, or in the event of seizure of goods and chattels by distress by a landlord for rent.

Support for Deserted Wives

Occupying an important place also among the legislative measures of interest to women of the Province, is The Deserted Wives' Maintenance Act. Under this Act, a married woman deserted by her husband or living apart from him because of his acts of cruelty or his refusal or neglect, without sufficient cause, to contribute to her maintenance though in a position to do so, can summon him before the court. The court, if satisfied that the husband, though able to support or contribute to the support of his wife, has wilfully refused or neglected to do so and has deserted her, may order that the husband shall pay her up to \$20 weekly, in accordance with his means.

Protection in Employment

Through a series of enactments, The Factories Act, The Female Employment Act, The Minimum Wage Act, employment of women and girls and the conditions under which they shall be obliged to work are regulated, and minimum wages fixed for

various kinds of employment. In a word, girls and women obliged to earn their living in shops, mail order houses, laundries and factories, hotels, restaurants and refreshment rooms, millinery, dressmaking and similar establishments are protected by Provincial law, and guaranteed a minimum living wage under safe and sanitary working conditions unexcelled elsewhere. They are also protected against summary dismissal, the law requiring that the employer give at least one week's notice in writing to a woman worker who has been in his employ for a continuous period of six months.

Old Age Pensions

Saskatchewan was the second Province to take advantage of the Dominion Old Age Pension scheme enacted by the Liberal Government at Ottawa despite Conservative opposition. This action was taken by the Saskatchewan Government at the first session of the Legislature following the enactment of this legislation at Ottawa, and came into effect last year (1928). Already more than 3,200 of Saskatchewan's aged, who were in needy circumstances, are in receipt of this pension, and the number is being added to every day. Under this legislation the needy aged, 70 years of age or over, may be paid a pension of \$240 per year, one-half of which is borne by the Province and the other one-half by the Dominion.

It is worthy of note that whereas, with the exception of British Columbia, under a Liberal administration, other provincial governments have passed the 50% share of the cost of Old Age Pensions back, in whole or in part, to the municipalities, the Saskatchewan Government meets the entire cost to the Province from the consolidated revenues without adding one cent to the tax burdens of the municipalities.

Protection of Children

Equally comprehensive and all-embracing legislation has been passed in the interests of children; fully a score of Acts of the Saskatchewan Legislature protecting and safeguarding children, including the property of infants, the legitimatization of children born out of wedlock, and compelling the alleged father of an illegitimate child to bear the expenses incidental to its birth and

to contribute weekly towards its support and maintenance until the child reaches the age of sixteen years or dies. The rights and interests of adopted children are fully safeguarded, and child rescue work throughout the Province is carried on under The Children's Protection Act administered by the Bureau of Child Protection. Included in the work of this Bureau is the care and supervision of neglected, ill-used and dependent children; the work of Children's Aid Societies and supervision of Children's Shelters, one of which must be maintained in each city with a population of 10,000 or over; supervision of maternity, nursing and other homes with a view to keeping a tight grip on the adoption of children and of preventing baby-farming. Adoption of children is surrounded by all possible safeguards. By recent amendment of The Wills Act, children of a deceased parent may benefit to the extent of his share in the property which would have come to him under the will of his father, had he survived the latter. Formerly, grandchildren in this category did not benefit, the bequest lapsing with the death of their parent.

Juvenile Courts

Through the establishment of Juvenile Courts and an Industrial School for Boys, juvenile offenders are dealt with in the most approved and enlightened manner, with a view to their moral reclamation and to prevent as far as may be possible their drifting into the class of habitual and hardened criminals. For the same reason a separate jail is maintained in which first offenders are incarcerated rather than have them mixed in with the confirmed criminal class in the regular prisons. For the hearing of cases of juvenile offenders, a woman judge has been appointed.

Education of Children

Attendance at school is compulsory throughout Saskatchewan until children attain the age of fifteen years or have passed Grade Eight. A Chief Attendance Officer for the Province and a local attendance officer in each district strictly enforce this law.

Under Saskatchewan law and regulations there is no reason why every rural district should not enjoy full educational facilities. A school district can be organized wherever there are within a reasonable radius at least ten children of school age, and in

exceptional circumstances a district can be organized where there are more than four but less than ten children of school age. In this latter case the trustees are empowered to make arrangements for the transportation of the children to the nearest established school and the Government bears one-third of the cost of such transportation. There are now 4,849 organized school districts.

Through the Outpost Correspondence School conducted by the Department of Education, schooling is provided for children in isolated families living in sections of the province where population is too sparse to make possible the organisation of even a small school. Approximately 175 children benefited from this service in 1928.

There are 334 schools in towns and villages having high school departments doing work up to Grades 11 and 12, while 1,500 other smaller schools, mostly rural, are providing some high school work for 4,000 pupils.

Saskatchewan is the only Province where special provision has been made for the education of the children of deceased and disabled soldiers. Children of soldiers on whose account a pension is paid because of death or injuries, such soldiers being residents of Saskatchewan at time of enlistment, are entitled to a grant up to \$240 a year for three years to enable them to pursue their studies past Grade Eight. Approximately 550 children have been assisted and \$235,000 paid by the Government in grants in behalf of these soldiers' children.

The education and maintenance in educational institutions of blind, deaf and dumb children has been and is provided for, the cost being borne by the Government. Heretofore, such children have been placed in institutions situated in Manitoba and in Eastern Canada at the expense of the Government, and it is to be remembered that part of the capital cost of the Manitoba institution was contributed by the Government of Saskatchewan. Throughout the years this arrangement has been operative, the Government has been awaiting the time when conditions would warrant the erection of an institution of the kind in Saskatchewan so that the children could be kept and educated in closer proximity to their relatives instead of being placed in schools remote from home and parental influence. The Government has decided that

conditions in Saskatchewan now warrant the step. Provision was made in the estimates for the erection, this year, of such an institution and, immediately following the legislative session, a special commission visited institutions of the kind in contiguous portions of the United States for the purpose of gathering data to be applied in the establishment of the Saskatchewan School for the Deaf.

Employment of Children

Under The Factories Act, already referred to, the employment of boys under the age of 14 years and girls under the age of 15 years in factories is prohibited, and the hours of employment for youths and young girls are limited to 48 hours in any one week, and the working hours must not be later than half past six in the afternoon, except under special circumstances and under a permit from a factory inspector.

Sale of Tobacco—Moving Pictures

The sale of tobacco to a minor under 16 years of age is prohibited in cities, towns and villages, unless under a written request or order from his parent, guardian or employer. Unless accompanied by a parent or responsible person, children under 14 years of age are not permitted to attend a moving picture exhibition after eight o'clock in the evening, nor is a child under 16 years of age permitted to drive a motor vehicle upon a public highway.

City and Town Councils are given full power to pass bylaws regulating the time after which children shall not be in a public place at night without proper guardianship, and regulating, controlling and licensing children engaged as express or dispatch messengers, vendors of newspapers, or bootblacks.

Infants' Rights Safeguarded

Complete protection of the rights of infants in property bequeathed to them is provided in legislation respecting the Official Guardian contained in The Infants Act and The Land Titles Act. These measures place a definite check upon executors and administrators in disposing of property in which infants are interested

and prevent them, when doing so, from ignoring the rights of the infants concerned. The whole idea of the legislation is not only to safeguard the rights of infants, but to do it without excessive cost. When any application is made dealing with an estate in which an infant is interested, notice must be served on the Official Guardian whose duty it then is to see that the rights of the infant are not neglected. This does away with the necessity of the infant having to be represented by his "next friend" or guardian at law during the court proceedings as well as by counsel. In this way, costs are kept within reasonable limits.

The question of costs has been the subject of considerable controversy from time to time, due in part to the fact that two schools of opinion exist relative to the Official Guardianship. The one school holds that the office should be a public office; that is, that the people as a whole should pay for the protection given to the infants. The other school takes the contrary view that the people who get the benefit should pay for the service themselves, particularly as, in the case of the infants, only those who have had estates bequeathed to them are concerned anyway. Then, too, the costs are such as the estate can bear, and there is no question at all of the infant being started off in life loaded with debt on this account. So far as court costs are concerned, the amount paid is in accordance with a fixed tariff controlled by the court officer, while counsel fees are what the judge may allow.

Workmen's Widows and Children Protected

Indicative of the constant attention devoted by the Government to safeguarding the interests of women and children against possible contingencies and eventualities, are the provisions embodied in the new Workmen's Compensation Act for the preservation, protection and subsistence of the family of a workman who dies from injury suffered in the course of his employment.

This important measure, one of the major pieces of legislation enacted at the 1928-29 session of the Legislature, contains several features of supreme significance to the wife and family of a workman engaged in hazardous employment, and to that extent it is of interest to all who appreciate the paramount necessity of enabling the bereaved mother to keep her growing children at home during the formative period of their lives. To that extent,

also, The Workmen's Compensation Act ranks high among the social legislation enacted at the instance of the Liberal Government in Saskatchewan.

The special features to which attention is directed are the provisions designed to place the widow of the deceased workman in an assured position, and to ensure for the children an education and a fair start in life.

The Act provides that the widow shall receive an income of \$40 monthly during her lifetime, with an additional \$10 monthly for each child under 16 years of age. The allowance per child is increased to \$15 a month upon the death of the mother, the sole proviso in these premises being that the total payable to the family shall not exceed 66⅔ per cent. of the earnings of the father at the time of his injury. Where the dependents are children, a monthly payment of \$15 for each child under 16 is provided, with a lump sum payment of \$100 to the foster mother, if any. It is interesting to note, too, that the family is relieved of expense incidental to the burial of the deceased workman.

Public Health and Pre-School Clinics

Apart from legislative enactments, there are numerous services provided by departments of the Government which are of vital interest to women. Included under this heading is the staff of Public Health Nurses who inspect the schools and examine the children, visit the homes of the children, and make report to the parents on their physical condition. Sixteen nurses are employed in this service.

Free clinics for the examination of children of pre-school age are conducted by the Department of Public Health in conjunction with women's organisations in all parts of the province. During the past year (1928) over 80 such clinics were held.

Inoculation Against Disease

Through the Department of Public Health, vaccines, serums and anti-toxins are supplied free of charge to all doctors in the province, for the inoculation of both children and adults against such diseases as smallpox, diphtheria, scarlet fever and typhoid

fever. Over \$21,000 was expended in the last fiscal year in this service.

Municipal Hospitals, Doctors and Nurses

Under legislation passed by the Liberal Government of Saskatchewan, adjacent municipalities are empowered to join forces for the purpose of establishing Union Municipal Hospitals and to levy taxation for the maintenance of the same. They can, if they so decide, provide free treatment in such hospitals. Municipalities are further empowered to engage a municipal doctor and pay him a salary up to \$5,000 a year. In like manner, municipalities may employ a nurse or nurses.

In districts where it is impossible to organise a Union Municipal Hospital, municipalities may make grants to assist in the erection of Red Cross Outposts and towards their maintenance, and like assistance may be extended on behalf of local improvement districts.

In all cases the Department of Public Health extends assistance through its expert officials, provides model plans for hospital buildings of varying sizes, and pays a grant of fifty cents per patient per day towards the operating cost of all hospitals.

The up-to-date and progressive character of the Government's health policies is exemplified by the legislation passed in the 1928 session and amplified at the 1928-29 session, for the establishment of Full Time Health Districts whereby groups of municipalities may unite to create such a district within the bounds of which will be provided for the benefit of the rural resident those sanitary, medical, nursing and other health services now enjoyed by city people. The Government is not only actively encouraging the organisation of such districts, but it undertakes to bear a substantial portion of the cost of maintaining them.

Saskatchewan has the most advanced legislation in the world for combatting tuberculosis. By recent enactments, free care and treatment of tubercular patients are provided. The Government, in this connection, assumes sole responsibility for essential capital expenditure besides contributing at the rate of \$1 per patient per hospital day towards the cost of treatment.

Saskatchewan's health legislation and policies are to a large extent responsible for the proud boast of the province that its death rate is lower than that of any other province or state in the world reporting vital statistics.

Debt Adjustment Bureau

During the war and in the trying and difficult years immediately following, the Government inaugurated the Debt Adjustment Bureau to act in the interests of farmers who, through one cause or another, got into financial difficulties and were in danger of losing their property. This Bureau handled thousands of cases, secured concessions from mortgage and loan companies, arranged compromises, administered the farmer's affairs at his request, and was successful in saving hundreds of farmers and their families from bankruptcy and the loss of their homes. This very valuable service recently has been placed on a permanent basis under a commissioner who, armed with additional powers, will continue to assist farmers through periods of financial stress.

Farm Loans Board

Further, through the provision of loans to farmers, the Government has assisted many of them to obtain relief from old mortgages bearing an excessive rate of interest and which were millstones around their necks; and by providing money at a reasonable rate of interest for farm loans has exercised a steadying and beneficial influence upon all farm loans and rates of interest charged for such loans throughout Saskatchewan.

The operations of the Debt Adjustment Bureau and the Farm Loans Board have been instrumental in helping many a farmer and his family to remain on the land when otherwise they would have been compelled to abandon their holdings. So much appreciated is it that representative farmers have not hesitated to declare the Saskatchewan Farm Loans scheme superior to that instituted by the Federal Government.

Good Reading for Rural Homes

In order to provide good reading and intellectual entertainment for rural homes, the Liberal Government of Saskatchewan

established two library systems—Travelling Libraries and the Open Shelf Library. A Travelling Library consists of a selection of approximately 50 books in a substantial box which is sent free of charge and freight prepaid to a rural district making request for the same and where a small local committee is selected to be responsible for it. The Library is retained for a period of nine months or a year and the books circulated throughout the district, each book being usually read on an average by ten persons. Upon return of the Library to Regina, a new selection of books is made and the Library again returned to the district. The only charge is payment of return freight on the box to Regina. There are 1,200 of these Travelling Libraries now circulating, representing over 60,000 books. This service costs the Government \$22,000 a year.

The Open Shelf Library is a reference library, non-fiction, and is available to all citizens of Saskatchewan, except those resident in Regina, Saskatoon and Moose Jaw, where large public reference libraries are in existence. One book at a time may be borrowed, to be retained for four weeks. This service is also free, books being mailed postage paid from Regina, the borrower merely being required to pay the return postage. There are over 8,000 volumes in the Open Shelf Library, and the cost to the Government is approximately \$10,000 a year.

British Domestic for Farm Homes

Entry of the Saskatchewan Government into agreements with the Federal and Imperial Governments to promote British immigration to the Province, has one reaction of more than passing interest to the farm women of Saskatchewan. Since inauguration of the Department of Railways, Labour and Industries, arrangements have been made whereby a constant supply of British domestics trained in Canadian utensils and Canadian ways, will be available for Saskatchewan farm homes. These domestics, before being allowed to emigrate from the British Isles to Canada, are given a six weeks' course at focal points under teachers experienced in Canadian requirements and thus eminently fitted to prepare their pupils for the service expected of them in the environment to which they will go, when qualified.

Conclusion

It is safe to say, and the statement is not an unduly partisan one either, that in no province or country are the rights of women and children more fully protected or their interests more intelligently and carefully safeguarded than in the Province of Saskatchewan. Further, the enviable position enjoyed by the province in this respect is in no small measure due to the fact that Liberal principles, Liberal policies and Liberal administration have guided the destinies of the province since its inception.

Nowhere in Canada does there exist a Government more sympathetic and anxious to further protect and safeguard those rights and interests, whether by legislation, regulation or wise administration, than is the Liberal Government of Saskatchewan, which has been responsible for the complete programme so sketchily and only partially outlined in this pamphlet.

At the present time there does not appear to be any vital matter of interest to, and calculated to advance the welfare of Saskatchewan's women and children that has been overlooked or neglected by the Government, but should any subject or issue arise the women of the province can have every confidence that any representations or appeal they may make to the Gardiner Government will not be made in vain, and that the same sympathetic consideration will be accorded them in the future as in the past; and solution of problems found through the application of those principles and policies which have always marked Liberalism as the friend and supporter of the masses of the people as distinct from the so-called special and privileged classes.

Co-operation

**Has Been
Is
Will Be**

**The GUIDING PRINCIPLE
and POLICY**

of the

**SASKATCHEWAN
LIBERAL
GOVERNMENT**